

The first tome or volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus
vpon the newe testamente.

Enpriented at London in Flete|strete at the signe of the
sunne by Edwarde Whitchurche, the last daie of
Ianuarie.

Anno. Domini. 1548.

Cum priuilegio Regali ad imprimen|dum solum.

EW

Page [unnumbered]

Page ii

To the moste puissaunt prince, and our moste redoubted soueraigne Lord Edward
the sixthe, by the Grace of God King of Englande, Fraunce, and Irelande, defendour
of the faith, and on yearth next and immediatly vnder God, of the Churches of
Englande and Irelande the supreme head, your moste humble, louyng, and
obedient subiecte, Nicolas Udal wisheth al grace and peace from God, with long and
thesame moste prosperous Reigne ouer vs, in all honour, health, and condigne
felicitie.

M

Oste noble and moste worthie Soueraigne,

it myght in me so basse and simple a persone, appeare no small presumpcion to
write vnto your Emperiall Maiestie, were not the cause of our publique
gratulacions so iust and so greate, that no manne, what euer he bee, hauyng
occasion to wryte, maye thynke hymselfe voyde of cryme; if he shoulde omytte to
de|clare and testifie the vnestimable conforte and ioye, whiche your vniuersall
moste louyng and obedient subiectes, daily more and more doe take of your
Maiesties singuler good procedinges and most excellent toward|nesse. For
where, by y^e space of many yeres vntil it pleased the goodnessse of God to sende
you vnto vs, the earneste prayers of all Englande was that we might haue a
Prynce: and after the tyme of your nativitie, whan God had so gracy|ously heard
our peticions, we eftsons prayed that ye myght haue grace to followe the godly
steppes and proceadynges of your moste noble father: euerye man seeth nowe
in your Maiestee suche towardenes of vertue and godly zele, that we haue
conceyued no lesse then an vndoubted hope y^t ye wyll (by Goddes
gouernaunce) ferre passe your saied father, to whom our daily wysshinges and
prayers thought it enough to haue you eguall. We all see in your highnesse suche
liuely sparkes of vertue and Christian regiment toward, that we cannot but
thynke Englande the moste fortunate Royalme that euer was, to whome God

hath geuen suche a Kyng, as in his minoritye of tendre babehood, leare[n]eth to haue mynde on his funcion, and to considre whose mynistre he is. If Royalmes (after the saiyng of Plato) are than and neuer els in blissed state, whan eyther Philosophiers, that is to saye, suche as knowe and loue God, doe reigne ouer thesame, or els the Kynges geue themselues to philosophie, that is to saye, to the due knowledge of God, to the disciplyne of vertue, and to the vp[er]ryght execucion of their office towardes all people: howe happye are we En[g]lishmen of suche a Kyng, in whose chyldehood appereth as perfeict grace, vertue, godly zele, desire of literature, grauitie, prudence, iustice, & magnaniraitie, as hath heretofore been found in Kinges of most mature age, of ful discretion, of auncient reigne, and of passing high estimacion? But suche is the goodnesse, of God, that to a people eagerly hongreyng and thrysting his iustice, earnestly sekyng the wayes of his trueth, tendrely embracyng his moste holy woorde, readily acceptyng the grace of his ghospel, wyllyngly conformyng themselves to the sincere doctryne of his commaundementes, he forgeateth not to geue a sapient Kyng and gouernour. And that God hath of a singuler faouure and mercye towardes this Royalme of Englande sente youre grace to reigne ouer

Page [unnumbered]

vs, y^e thyng selfe by the whole processe doeth declare: the summe whereof I shal in a short discourse no more but briefly touche & passe ouer, leste I might seme rather to haue sought an occasiō in the waye of flatery to extolle you and your progenie, then as this present cause enforceth me, to geue due testimonie of the trueth. In dede your singular excellēcie in al kindes of princely towardenesse is such, y^t no place, no tyme, no cause, no booke, no person either in publique audilence or els in priuate coūpaignie maketh any mencion of your Maistie, but he thynketh hymself euen of a veray conscience boūd to powdre thesame w^t manyfold praises of your incōparable vertues & giftes of grace. Al which prayses & magnifying though they bee in dede muche inferiour to your moste woorthye desertes hytherto, yet your maiestie muste take and repute, not as a matter of insolencie by your moste louyng and faithful subiectes ministred vnto you, but rather as a thyng wrought in them by the instincte of god, to admonishe you of the Regal estate that he hath called you vnto: not as a prouocaciō of wordelye gloriyng in your self, but as an instrumente of admonicion to continue you in remembraunce of thankes geuing, and of discharging youre office: not as the baites of flatery meaning to fede your Maiestie in any conceipte of pryd, but rather as a glasse wherein to beholde your self what ye are, and how ye ought to continue: not as the pleasaunt ticleing or clawyng of adulacion but rather as a caucion that ye dooe nothing in all your life whereby ye maye bee founde or thought vnwoorthie the laude that is geuē you: and finally, not as a nourish[ing]mente of any humam vanitie, but rather as a spur of exhortacion, not onely to beware •hat ye goe not backe, ne degenerate, or decline from the godly trade of religiō, of vertue, of litterature, of prudēce of benig•itie, of iustice, of princely regiment that ye are nowe entred into: but also

that ye procede as ye haue begonne, and still goe forwarde encreasyng in all godlinesse, that your procedynges and consummacion maie bee aunswerable to your moste princely and Christian begynnynge. Neyther is there any subiect of yours worthie life. whiche woulde to any other ende or purpose, attempt to magnifye you in thys tendre age, but in hope, that if ye bee not alreadye come to the perfeccion prolpouned vnto you, ye wyll labour and contende (as age maye suffre,) to growe and reache vnto it. For if Philip of Macedonie, being an ethnike and a pagane Kyng, whan he was railed at and muche euil spoken of by the Atheniens, toke therof an occasiō well to reigne & gourne his people, alleagynge himself to bee enforced and cōstreigned therūto, y^t he might proue his enemyes vntrue men of their reportes: howe muche more necessitie of well doyng is incumbent to your highnesse, that ye maye in tyme comyng, verifie the praises and cōmendacions, whiche the publyque consent of the worlde dooeth nowe attribute vnto you? Howebeit we your moste feythfull louyng subiectes dooe nothyng doubte, but that God beeyng the geuer of all good gyftes, the father of all mercie, and the God of all coumforte, who of his infinite goodnesse hath prouided you to reigne ouer vs, wyll also in suche wyse directe all your wayes, that he wyll e|uydently declare hymself by his eternall wysedome, and by his counsayll in|scrutable, to haue purposely ordeyned and appoyned you to dooe high thyn|ges, whome he hath by his myghtifull arme so woondrefuly sent. For where your moste noble father of famous memorie Kyng Henry the eyght beeyng

otherwyse by al tokens of natural constitucion, a man hable and also likely to haue chyldren, had alreadye by the twoo most faire blossomes and most freshe floures of the world, the lady Maries Grace, & the lady Elizabethes Grace, your Maiesties moste noble and moste dere sistur• yet liuyng, declared him|selfe apte to be veray fruicteful of procreacion: yet had he continued eight and twentie yeres Kyng of this Royalme, ere he had any soonne in lawfull ma|trimonie begotten, to whome he myght leaue the succession of this his Empe|riali croune and sceptre. In the meane tyme Kyng Henry as a moste vigilaunt pastour ceaseth not with perpetuall trauayll to procure for the commodities and wealth of Englande, he ceaseth not by moste politique and moste holsome lawes to prouide for the establishyng of Englande in peace and tranquilitie. And because by the diligent readyng and meditacion yf holy Scriptures, he founde and obserued the true blisynge of God, and the fountayne of al grace and prosperitie to procede of the knowleage of God, and the due obseruacion of his lawes, lyke a moste christian Prince and a true defendour of the fayth, he conuerted and emploied al his studie and cogitacions to the redresse of such abuses in religiōn, as by the moste corupte doctrine of the Romishe papacye had by degrees crepte into Christes churche, and preuailyng throughe conti|nuance of yeres, were nowe so confirmed and established throughout all par|ties of Christendome, that the Romishe Nabugodonozor held vs in forer

sub|ieccion, then euer was Israell holden in the captiuitie of olde Babilon, and so should we haue stil continued, had it not pleased almighty God of his botom|lesse mercie, to reise vp a Christian Cyrus your moste puissaunt father, to re|store vs agayne to our freedome in Christes bloud. For the Romishe Nabugo|donozor had by wrestyng and peruerstyng the holy scriptures of God to the establiſhing and maintenaunce of his vsurped supremtie clymed so high: that he was not nowe content to sitte in the chaire of Moses, but had moste blasphemously exalted hymſelfe aboue all that is called God, that is to say, had made Goddes woerde frustrate, that his moste corrupte and moste pestilente doc|trine myght take place. He had by his deiulishe inuencions caste such a foggie miste of ignoraunce ouer Goddes moste holy Bible, he had with his Phariſaicall interpretacions in ſuche wyſe polluted the ſinceritie of Christes doc|trine, he had ſo infeeted the clere fountayne of Goddes woerde with the ſuddes of humayne tradicions, and the dregges of vayn ceremonies, he had by meane of papisticall trouperie ſo peruerterd the vnderſtanding of holy ſcriptures, he had ſo defaced the puritie of the faith with the beggerly patched cloke of ſuperſticious weorkes not commaunded by Goddes lawe, he had ſo perplexed the grace of the ghospell with the false feigned merites and weorkes of ſuperero|gacion, he had ſo mangled the Christian profession with mo then an hundred ſoondry ſectes of counterfaicte cloystreers of Antichristes owne generacion, li|uing like idle loitreers and vera•dranes, and vnder the pretence of religion de|uouryng the common weales that woulde maynteyn theim, he had ſo oppreſſed the true religion and wurſhyppyng of God wyth pilgremages to dead ſtockes and ſtones of mannes handie weorke, with tranſferryng the honoure whiche was due to God alone, vnto Sainctes and to feigned miracles, wyth other kyndes of idolatry innumerable, and wyth a purgatorye of materiall fyre, and (to make ſome ende of ſpeakyng in a matter of it ſelfe infinite,) he had ſo clene ſubuerted al good and godly conuersacion and doctrine: that Satan had

Page [unnumbered]

no more power of the worlde whan Christe came downe to yearth for to redeme mankynde, then religion was nowe broughte oute of frame by the tyrannye of the Romyshe Babilon, nor God and hys ſoonne Iesuſ Christe any where lesse founde, than whan he was moste buisily named and ſpoken of in pulpites. Beeyng vnder the title and name of Christe, the moſte eagre aduersarye of Christe and his ghospell, he ioyned hymſelfe to the Philistines, and beyng their Goliah more nere ſixtene then ſixe cubites high, neither feared▪ ne ſhamed to ſhewe hymſelfe in playne battayl of defiaunce, ne ſpared to open hys blaſphemous mouthe, ne to drawe hys tyrannous ſweorde, ne to ſhake his huige murderyng ſpear, agaynst the true Israelites of Christes little ſelie flocke, and moſte presumptionuously to braggue agaynst all that euer woulde profesſe the ſyncere and vpryght doctrine of Gods woerde, tyllyt pleased God to reyſe vp vnto vs an Englishe Dauid your moſte noble father, who without anye ar|moure or weapon of yron and ſtele, without any harnesse of mannes makynge, without

displeighing any banners in araye of humaine battaile, shoulde out of the slyng of his Regall auctoritie, cast the corner stone of Goddes woorde, whiche lyghtyng vpon the forehead of the sayd Goliah, felled his papacie stone dead, & crushed it to poudre, neuer to be hable any more to noye or to face Engllyshe Israel. Our sayd Dauid kyng Henry the eyght had learned by the boke of Deuteronomie (in whiche booke the feithfull seruaūt of God Moyses char|ged that whomsoeuer Israel shoulde make Kyng ouer them, thesame from the tyme that he wer sette in his Regall throne, should all the dayes of his lyfe haue continuall meditacion, and should stylly reade therin, to the entente he myght learne to feare the Lorde his God, for to kepe all the woordes of hys lawe, and his ordinaunces for to dooe theim, and that he should not turne from the commaundementes eyther to the ryght hand or to the left, that bothe he and his children myght prolong their dayes in his Kyngdome:) he hadde (I saie) learned in the same booke, on the one syde the blesynges of god promysed to all suche prynces as on theyr owne parties woulde for the loue and feare of god walke vprightly in the execucion of the sayde commaunde|mentes, and woulde partly by theyr good exaumple prouoke theyr subiectes to dooe the same, and partly by due execucion of iustice make them ashamed and also afeard to swerue or declyne from the lorde their god: and on the other syde the terrible malediccions and plagues of gods wrathe, threatned to all suche as neglected the vpright obseruyng of all his preceptes and wayes. He loued the goodnesse of God, and feared his stroke, he sawe religion to bee ferre out of frame, he sawe some parte of his moste earnest trauailes and ende|uour to sette Englande in moste quiet and blissefull state, to fayl of condigne effecte through defaulte of reformacion in matters of religion. He saw & found by experiance of his owne manyfolde moste princely enterpryses, the onely cause why Christian Royalmes are plagued wyth warres, derthes, famyns, pestilences, & other mortall extremyties, to come of Gods indignacion, because the worlde was so ferre gone astraigh from Christe, that nothyng was nowe waxed so odious or detestable as his holy woorde, nothyng reputed so blasphemous, as Christes holy ghospell, nothyng so lyght estemed as Christes blood and passion. He sawe the onely waye to Goddes fauour to bee the en|bracyng of his holy Scriptures, the drounyng wherof had enforced God to power his indignacion vpon the Christian worlde. He sawe and well per|ceyued

that God of his mercie was wylling to ceasse his wrath and venlgeaunce, if the Christian people woulde returne to hym. He perceyued God to offre his grace vnto the worlde by openyng their iyes, if leauyng theyr errour and ignoraunce thei woulde embrace the clere lyght of the ghospell. He sawe moreouer that his moste louyng subiectes of Englande, (whome his godly exaumple had prouoked to tendre and seke the glorye of God) dyd nowe houngre and thirste the righteousnesse of God, and the knowleage of his woorde. He playnly sawe that no waye there was to a reformacion, but by this onely meane, yf the autoritie and vsurped supremetie of the See of Rome wer extirped, abolished, and clene

extincte. For he sawe his countreimen the Englishe Israelites to bee holden in
suche extreme bondage wythin the Romishe Egypte, that there was no hope of
deliueraunce, but by the onely power and myghtifull arme of God reysyng vp
some Moses that woulde in the face of that same moste cruell Pharao require
that Israell myght bee freely leat goe. The huige seuenfold headed draguon was
to the simple in|feriour people, suche an obstacle, that they myght not come to
Christe, and to all Christen princes suche a terrour, that they durste not. This
draguon besydes the monstreous hissing of his curses and excommunicacions,
and besides the contagious infeccion of idolatry and superstition, wherewith he
had by his whelpes the cancarde papistes so adblasted the worlde, that he had
enwrapped and drowned all Christendome in blindnesse and errore: he hadde
also a mortall styg in his taill, wherewyth he ceassed not by all kyndes of
deathes and tormentes, to destruye and mourdre as manye as woulde once open
theyr lyppe agaynst his moste detestable and moste blasphemous
abominacions. This draguon ceassed not continually to persecute the wo|man
clothed in the sunne, that is to saye, Christes dere spouse the churche of
England, but as a rampyng and roryng lyon, he stoode euer ready watchyng that
he myghte deuoure her chyldren the Christian flocke, whiche she nowe groned to
bryng foorth to Christe, had not the Englishe Michael kyng Henry the eight taken
in hande to fight agaynst the sayde draguon, and been strengthened of God
wyth hys Aungelles the lordes, and godlye prelates, to caste the sayde draguon
that olde serpente and his Aungels oute of Englande. This was the great harlotte
that sitteth vpon manye waters, wyth whome the kynges of the yearthe haue
committed fornicacion, and the inhabiteres of the yearthe been made drounken
wyth the wyne of her fornicacion: the woman sittynge vpon the rosecououred
and tenhorned beaste full of names of blasphemye, she sitting araid in purple
and rosecolour, and decked with golde, precious stones, perles, and in her hande
a cuppe of golde full of abhominacions and filthines of her fornicacion, and in
her forehead a name of great misterie written, *great Babylon the mother of
whoredome and abhominacions of the yearth*: and the same whore drounken
with the bloude of Sayntes, and with the bloude of wytnesses of Iesus. Thys was
the huyge monstre Hydra, (to whome the poetes attribute seuen heades, some
eyghte, and some an hun|dred heades) whome aswell king Iohn of Englande, as
also soondrie other Cstristen princes had attempted to vanquishe, but as soone
as they had cutte of one heade, three other heades grewe vp for it, so that
euerye wounde that was geuen him was a more confirmation and encrease of
his strength, vntyll our Hercules Kyng Henrye the eyghte perceyuyng that no
power, no

puissaunce, no weapon was hable to confounde hym sauynge onelye the
consu|myng fyer of Goddes woerde, prouided the Byble to bee sette forth in the
Englishe tounge, and to bee sette vp in euerye churche, where it myght bee read
of his people. Long time endured this conflycte betwene our Englyshe

Herculles and the Romishe Hydra ere he could bee destruied, so fast grewe vp a more nombre of serpentine heades, whan any one was cut of. For besydes the many|folde moste monstruous heades, of Idolatrye, Pylgremages, supersticions, countrefaictre religions, and innumerable abuses mo, whiche kyng Henry had to cutte of, his whelpes the indurate generacion of papistes deuised all meanes possible to kepe hys auctoritie styl in Englande, ne lefte any engin vnattemp|ted to staigh and lette the abolishyng of hys vsurped power, abusyng the sim|ple people wyth all kyndes of delusion and iuggleynge of countrefaictre myra|cles, of feigned visions, of liyng in traunces, of rapcions euen vnto the thyrde heauen, of sophistycall learning, of holy contestacions, of subtily inuented pro|phecies, of bolde comminacions and threateninges, of voices auouched to haue come from heauen, of peruryng the sence of scripture to mainteine his power, of wrytyng bookes in derogacyon of the kynges procedynges.

And to the ende there shoulde not lacke any kinde of wickedenesse that the saied Hydra and his adherentes, moonkes, fryers., and other cloystreers were hable to weorke, he founde meanes besydes many other stormes of forrayne warres and conspiracies, so ferre to abuse the credulitie of the simple ignoraunte peolple, that he brought theim halfe in a detestacion and hatered of Gods woorde, and seduced theim to aduenture with a lytle blaste of sedicion, to distourbe the cogitacions of suche a noble and a good kyng, beeyng than moste ea•nestelye yea (I maye saye) onely sette in studiying for the estableishemente and continua|cion of peace and tranquilitie in this Royalme for euer. All whiche terrours coulde not appalle kyng Henryes moste stoute courage, but that he wente tho|rough with the reformacion, whiche the spirite of God so wrought in hys harte and conscience, that he sawe it to bee necessarie, and hymselfe to bee chosen of God, to bee the instrumente therof.

All this whyle Englande thoughe not yet veray wyllyngly ne vniuersally relceyuyng the grace of the ghospell offreed vnto vs, together wyth the moste heauenly iewell and treasure of Goddes holy scripture, in the mother lan|guage: ye• neuerthelesse (as oure partyes and moste bounden dueties were) tenderlye consideryng the moste vigilaunte care and studie, and moste earneste trauayle of oure moste gracious soueraigne employed for our behoufe, and daily bestowed in fortifiyng all parties of the Royalme agaynst the malicious assaultes and conspiracies of the said Romishe Hydra, or any other enemies by his procuremente: Englande (I saye) ceassed not with continuall prayer to be|seche the goodnesse of almyghtye God, to rewarde the godlye mynde and doolyng of our kyng nowe wearyng oute hys bodye in trauayllyng for vs, and spendyng his lyfe in procuryng for our wealth and safegarde, wyth a soonne, to whome, whan he shoulde departe hence to heauen, he myght safely committe and leaue his croune, with the gouernaunce of vs his moste dere beloued sub|iectes: Thus did all Englande by the space of many yeres persiste in continuall prayer: but almyghtie God wyllyng to shewe for what personnes he reser|lueth hys blyssynges, as soone as we had throughe better instruccyonis con|formed our selues to the expulsyng of the Romyshe Antichriste, to the gladde

embracyng of hys woorde, and to the receyuyng of his ghospell in all partyes: immediately heard our lamentable peticions, and sent your most noble mother Quene Iane of famous memorie, whom (as it maie be thoughte) hys prouyldence and consailles vnscrutable had purposely ordeyned, prepared, & caused to be borne for none other office, but that she myght bee moste dere wife to suche a kyng, and mother to suche a Prynce. For as soone as she had in moste lawful matrymonye brought foorth your grace, she departed this worlde: as though she should haue saied: I haue dooen the offyce y^t I was borne for nowe fare ye well. The freashe floure of my pure virginitie, I haue moste safely committed to my moste dere spouse kyng Henry for to kepe, and to you his moste feithfull louyng subiectes, I leaue behynde me my onely soonne, the iewell that ye haue so long desired, so sore longed for, and so often craued of God. As lōg as ye shal tendre his welfare, ye shall satisfye my desyre, whome I broughte foorth for that purpose. If it maye please God to sende hym longe lyfe, I haue the full fruicte of my trauaylle, I haue my deathe abundauntely recomponed, and my roume emong you euen to my mynde supplyed. I haue nowe no more to dooe on yearth. If I haue demerited any loue or thanke at your handes, bestowe it wholly on my soonne, whan I am gone from you. Thus departed the moste vertuous ladye Quene Iane, whose deathe we haue the lesse cause to lamente, because that by hope we are assured, that she is gone from peyne to ioye, from care to reste, frō sorowe to blisse, frō this trāsitorie world to immortalitie. We haue cause to suppose that God for the excedayng great loue and faouure that he beareth towardes Englande, whan she had broughte foorth to the worlde suche a soonne, tooke her awaye immediately of purpose to rewarde her wyth a croune eternall, for whome all temporall and worldely rewardes were incomparably ouer basse, ne any yearthly croune sufficient: so that to lamente her, is rather to enuye her felicitie and blisse. And she beeyng nowe in heauen with her moste desired ioye Christe, inuiteth and requireth vs that our beneuolente loue and affeccion, whiche muste haue been deuided betwene you and her, maye bee wholy transferred and bestowed on your highnesse, whome to bryng foorth she was not onely well contented, but also muche desyrous to dye. So that we are all double bounde to loue youre Maiestie, fyrste because youre moste dere mother was taken from vs ere she myght receyue any fruicte of our grate and thankfull hertes for bryngyng foorth to her cōtrey suche a soonne, and than muche more, because that in your moste Royall persone is reposet al the worldly ioye, coumforte, hope, and expectacion bothe of vs that are nowe liuyng (whom I truste your Grace shall surutue,) and also of our posteritie. Neyther can liustely affyrme her to be dead, that hath leafte behynde her suche fruicte of her bodye, whome to bryng foorth (I dare auouche) she though her death so well bestowed, that in case she myght returne to lyfe again, and be in her former state of mayde & Quene, she woulde readily paryshe & couenaūt with God, on thesame prycce to bryng foorth your Grace vnto her countrey. And so greate was the ioye and gladnesse of Englande in the nativitie of your highnesse, that the veray prouidence of God thought it necessarie to

temper our immoderate mirth & reioysing with the death of your most vertuous mother (for neuer was y^e deceasse of any Quene in England more lamēted) lest we myght haue ben so inebriate with our vnestimable felicitie, y^t thesame might haue made vs proud, and percase haue brought vs in suche flaterye of our selues, y^t we woulde haue

Page [unnumbered]

forgotten, or perchaunce not acknowledged no nor espied you to bee sente vnto vs aswell by the most mightie and most woondrefull power of Goddes hand, as also of his exeadyng mercie, and faouure towardes Englande. He myghte haue taken her away ere she had cum to the bearing or conceiuing of you in her wombe, if he had not specially loued and tendred our good king Henry and vs. It was in his hande and pleasure to haue taken you bothe (whiche thynge god forbydde) if he had n̄t by leauing the better of the twoo with vs, been willing bothe many festelye to declare his almyghtifull power ioyned wyth hys moste gracious mercie and tendre compassion towardes England, and also to bridle the insolencie, which by hauyng you both still wyth vs (suche is mannes frailte, and readinesse to swerue) he paraduenture foresawe, would haue growen in vs. God in takyng awaye her at your birthe did plainlye ministre vnto vs, both an earnest warning, and also a iust prouocation of vncessaunt praying for the life and prosperous continuaunce of your Grace being of nature and by the condilcion of your birth, mortal as your mother was. The birth of your Maiestie was the more swete, because it was so long wished for, so long loked for, and so long craued ere it came. A great benefite is muche the sweter that it is not obteyned without great and long suit. The pleasure of a good turne is much diminished whan it is at the fyrst obteyned. The desirefulnessse of our myndes muche aug|menteth and encreseth our pleasure. The admixtion also and (as who shoulde saye) the sawcyng of pleasures with some kind of misfortune either afore going or in the middes adtempered, graceth altogether, and maketh it the more accep|table. Honey is waloweish and ouercasteth the stomake, if it be plenteously ta|ken by it selfe alone: but if wyth vinegre it be made eagredoulce, than is it not onely delectable and plesaunt of relice, but also comfortatue and holsome too. The deathe of the moste vertuous lady and moste woorthie Quene Iane your mother, beyng ioyned with your birth, made such a ••mperature of sorowe and ioye together, that bothe our mournyng whiche otherwyse shoulde scaree haue founde anye ende, was soone mitigated: and also our moste tendre desire of enjoying your Maiestie, much the more encreased. We had so long groned, we hadde so long cryed to God for a Prynce: that excepte he hadde in the moste desi•ed birthe of the same, aspersed the deathe of your mooste •ere Mother: we shoulde by our immoderate felicitee haue tempted, and prouoked hym to take you bothe from vs. It was hys goodness• that woulde not suffre vs to fall. For muche sooner and sorer doeth immoderate ioye drounde mannes realson, then immoderate doloure. Thus than (as I haue sayd) as soone as we willingly

applyed our selfes aswell to y^eexiling of al pap•stri, as also to then|bracing of the woerde of God, he immediately fulfylled and satisfyed our• delsyres by sending your Grace vnto vs after a woondreful sorte: as if he shoulde in playn wordes haue saide: Now that ye haue gladly receiued my word, ye shal haue that whiche ye cannot but of my gyfte obteyne, that is to wete, a Prynce, and wyth him al worldely coumforte, ioye and secu•itie that ye maye wel per|ceiue both y^t nothyng is vnpossible to God, & also that if ye abyde in me, and my woordes abyde in you, aske what ye wyll, and it shalbee dooen for you. Whan I saye, the woerde of God, y^e law, the preceptes, or y^e cōmaundemētes of God, I mene not fantastical dreames of mānes inuenciō (for these thinges are nothing lesse thē y^e worde of God) but I mene the true & liuely worde of God conteyned in holy scriptures: I mene his holy gospel & testament, purely & sinc•rely taken

Page vi

without the venomous corrupcion of the fylthie dregges, or of the soure lea|uen of any the aboue rehersed pestilencies, accordyng as your moste noble fa|ther our late soueraigne lorde kyng Henry the eight with vnestimable care, studye, and trauayll, mynded and laboured to haue it sette foorth, & to be daily preached and taught to hys people without any declynyng eyther to the ryght hande or to the left. Whiche thyng if he could not so throughly accomplishe as his moste earneste hertes desyre was, I truste y^e almyght•e god, who hath prouided and sent vs your highnesse a moste woorthye soonne to succede suche a woorthye father, wyl by his especial grace illumine your herte to procede in the way of trueth whiche your father hath opened vnto you, & wyl geue you grace al thinges to perfe•cte whiche your father moste godly begāne to your handes. And although to maynteine, vpholde, & conserue y^t kyng Henry preparyed and hath nowe lefte to your gouernaunce, is of it self so muche matter of immortall honour & renoume, y^t it wer enough for any kyng to doo•: yet hath God prouided y^t ye shall not haue cause to •aie as Alexāder the great conque•our, whan he considered the great & manyfold actes of his father Phyliп kyng of Macedo|nie, said: My father wil leaue nothing for me to doe. For god of a veraie pietye that he had on kyng Henries vncomparable & the same vncea••aūt trauaylles for the publique behouf & welth of Englande long yeres susteined, tooke hym awaie from this troubleous worlde as soone as he had prepaired your Grace in a readinesse by due successiō of inheritaūce to receyue at his hādes y^e sceptre & croune of his roymes & dominions. God by a special dispēsaciō breakē of y^e course of his life ere al thinges wer brought to a ful perfecciō, because he would declare hymselfe to haue appoynted your Maiestie, not to lyue altogether in a carelesse supmitie, but in a perpetual exercise of al princely vertues, y^t ye might consūmate & finishe suche regall enterpryses as he begonne, partly in other worldly affaires, & especially cōcernyng y^e redresse of abuses in matters of relligiō. Kyng Hēry was the Moses whō God elected

stoutly to deliuer vs out of the hādes of y^e Romishe Pharao, & to conueigh vs through the read sea of the waueryng iudgemētes of mē, & the troubleous sourges of y^e popishe generaciō swelling & rageyng agaynst him, and through the wildrenesse of beyng lefte a|lone destitute of y^e assistēce or coumforte of other Christē princes, whiche in this so noble and so godly an enterprise might laudably haue sette in foote w^t him, & through this wildrenes to cōducte vs as ferre as y^elāde of Moab: but ye are the Iosue, whom god hath appoynted to bryng vs into the lande of promissiō, flowyng and rēnyng wyth milke and honey, & to sette vs Englishe men in the lande of Canaan which is the sincere knowleage & the free exercise of Goddes moste holy woorde. He was the Moses, who by goddes ordeinaunce & dispensacion wrote the booke of Deuteronomie, whā he caused the holy Byble to bee turned into Englishe, & laied it in the tabernacle, whā he cōmaūded thesame to bee •aied in al & singular the churches throughout his Royalmes & dominiōs: chargeyng the Leuites, y^t is, the Byshops, Pastours, & Curates, in the time of the free yere, y^t is, at al due & conuenient seasons, to read and declare it vnto al y^e people gathered together, both mē, women & chyldren, yea & the straungiers y^t were in any his cities, y^t they might heare, learne, and feare their lorde God. But where some of the priestes y[•] sōnes of Leui, had now in these last yeres through their iugleyng, theyr false packyng, and their playn sorcerie bewitched kyng Henry with a wrong persuasion, & had so craftily coūpaced and conueighed the

Page [unnumbered]

matier, y^t vnder the pretence & coulour of religion, they kept the worde of God frō the iyes and eares of the people, beatyng his moste faythfull louyng subiec|tes frō the knowleage therof, wyth a mortal whyppe made of sixe deadly knot|ted chordes, & in the meane tyme kept the booke of the lawe hiddē, vntyll they had so ferre obscured, derkened, & oppressed y^e worde, y^t all thynges were •eplete with errorre and insinceritie: it now euidently appereth your Maiestie to be the faythfull Iosias, in whose tyme the booke of y^e law is found out in the house of the Lorde, & by your moste godly iniuncions read in the hearyng of all your people, and a couenaunt made with the Lord y^tthey shal walke after the Lord, & shal kepe his commaūdementes w^t al their hertes & al their soules, wherunto all your people moste willyngly dooeth consent by glad receyuyng of all suche good ordre & reformacion as by your Maiesties moste godly direccion is my|nistred vnto them. Your most noble father was the Dauid, who of a good hert & zele intended, yea & made mociō to build an house for the Lordes name: but we all trust y[•]ur highnes to be the Salomon, whō god hath appointed and by special dispensacion elected to build & finishe an house for him for euer, by restolryng & establishyng the true Christian religion. Which thyng y^t your Maiestie maye haue the grace & spirite to doe, ye lacke not the perpetual

wyshinges and prayers of al your most louyng and obedient subiectes. The world seyng these your moste princely begynnynges in this your tendre yeres of chyldehood, is confirmed in a sure hop• and expectacion y^t your Maiestie wil in proces of time growe to bee in this behalfe a veray Phenix emong Christian princes, & a mir|rour and spectacle vnto them all. And certes your Maiestie is in muche other case thē other kinges of England before your tyme haue been. For where (the frowardnes o• fortune beyng suche, that moste parte of thynges lyke as they are through her aide and fauoure easie to bee achiuied, so the same through her malignaunt wi•kedenes are more easie to be lost again) it deserueth no lesse but rather more glorie wel to kepe and maintein thynges wel gottē, thē to acquyre more to it: some of your moste woorthie progenitours haue had a •eadye path|way to renoume, and haue had but an easie trauail to succede & folow y^e prince nexte afore goyng in the laudable exaūple of politique regimete, of woorthye enterpryses, of Marciall prowesse, of noble but yet common actes of chi•faltie, of notable and famous enterprises, but yet enclosed within the coumpace of mannes reache. But your grace succeadyng Henry the eight, shall not be hable to satisfie nor aunswere the earneste expectacion of the worlde, onlesse ye doe ex|cell. Nothing maie serue your grace but singularitie. Ye haue in his exaumple suche a marke set vp vnto you, as without the sweat and laboures of Hercules (of whō the Poetes feigne, y^t he bore vp and stayghed heauen self w^t his shoul|ders) ye shall not be hable to clyme vnto. Ye must surmount and passe a kyng whiche was in his tyme pierlesse, & a matter of publique admiracion to the vniuersall world. And suche are your begynnynges alreadye, aswell in Marciall chiefalrye, as also in politi•ue ordinaunce of ciuile lawes at home, aswell in de|struiyng the image of Baall, and rootyng vp of al Idolatry, as also in settynge a ferther good ordre for matters of religion: that it wil not suffice if ye bee but equal to him. King Hēry the eight besides his felicitie & luckie fortune in al his most Regal ētreprises aswel by marciall chiefalrie as also ī politike gouernaūce, besides his manyfold cōquestes and victories in Fraūce, Scotlande, Irelande, & els where, besides his vnestimable high trioūphes, voiages, and actes dooen

bothe at home and beyonde the seas, besydes his exceeding great and manye buyldinges of palacies, Honours, Mainours, castels, fortresses, holdes, block|hous-es, hauens, aswel for the strength & safegarde of his roymes and domi|niōs as also for y^e cōmoditie of frēdes arryuing, & y^e annoiaunce of the enemies, besydes the defence and mayntainaunce of al hys portes and narowe seas with Carikes, barkes, hulkes, shyppes, galies, and many other high and sumptuous deuises of shypwright, besydes the aboundaunt furnishing of all and singuler the premisses with al kyndes of ordinaunce, artillerie, & other requisite prouy|siō, besydes y^e foūdyng, edifing & erecting of an vncredible noumbrē of bishops Sees, cathedral Colleges, lectures, scholes, and other Colleges for studentes in bothe vniuersitees, and so sumptuous endowyng of euerye of them

with landes, possessions, Iewels ornamentes and all requisite furniture so muche and so large, as euerye one of the premysses particularly myght bee iudged an acte sufficient in a kynges tyme to bee dooen, besydes his moste vigilaunt and careful studie about the enactyng of a great volume of ryght holsome statutes and lawes for the commoditie and behoufe, of the publique weale of England and his other dominions, and emong these, hys vnceassaunte endeuoure albout a reformacion in religion, and therin (as a thyng moste necessarie for all common weales tendreing Christes glorie,) the extirpyng and abolishynge of the detestable vsurpacion of the papacie of Rome, the rootyng vp of all sectes of cloisterers, of all countrefaictre religyon, and of Idolatrie, together with the setting forth of the holy Scripture in the vulgare Englyshe tounge, besydes all these premysses and other his actes mo then a long tyme maye suffyse to re|herse, king Henry was a Prince of singuler prudence, of passing stout courage, of magnanimitie incomparable, of inuincible fortitude, of notable actiuitee of dexteritee woondreful. He was a continual wellyng fountayne of eloquence, a veray rare spectacle of humanitie, of ciuilitye or good nourture an absolute presidente, a speciall paterne of clemencie and moderacion, a worthie exaumple of regal iustice, a botomlesse spring of largesse and benignitie. He was in al the honest artes and faculties profoūdely seen, in al liberal disciplines equal with y^e chiefest, in no kynd of litterature vnexpert. He was to y[•] world an ornamente, to his countrey a treasoure, to his frendes a coumforte, to his foes a terroure, to his faithful and louing subiectes a tendre father, to innocentes a sure protecltour, to wylfull malefactours a sharp scourge, to his common weale and good people a quiet hauen and ancore of safegarde, to the distourbers of the same a rocke of extermision, in hainous and intolerable crymes agaynst the publique weale a seuere iudge, in the lyke offences committed agaynst hymself a readye porte & refuge of mercie, except to suche as woulde persiste vncorrigible. A man he was in al giftes of nature, of fortune, & of grace, pierles, & (shortly to breake of in a matter of it selfe infinite,) a man aboue al praises. Suche a king hath God sette vp before your Maiestie for an exaumple, a spectacle, & a paterne of al princely vertues whome egally to matche, wil bee with the veray leste that is looked for of these your moste Regall & Christiā begynnynges in thys youre tendre age. For mete it is that lyke as your highnesse is heire and successour of your most noble fathers croune & treasures, euen so much more bee ye heyre of his moste princely vertues: and like as ye would employ al possible industrie, & diligence to maynteine and ampliate the external possessions of your empier, euen so to augmente the vertues of the mynde, beeynge the more precious pos|session

of the twayn. Neither is there in this behalfe on our parties, your Maltestees moste beneuolent & faithful louing subiectes, any lesse hope to be con|ceyued of you for that y^t is to come, then we doe already fele ioye and coumforte of that we see present. For suche excellent begynnynges beyng ferthered by the

publique and daily praiers of al your faythful & true herted subiectes, cannot but haue stil better and better degrees of continuaunce and encrease, especially hauyng suche noble and sapient Counsaillours as it hath pleased God to prouide for you, and to geue you in this your tendre babehood. For that all suche well dooynges in young kynges, and by reason therof prosperous successe in all thynges, procedeth of faithfull and godly Counsaillours: it maie euidently appeare by the notable exaumples of the twoo younge kinges of Israell Ma|nasses and Iosias. Whoso wyll peruse the booke of the kynges, shall fynde that from the begynnynge of Achabs reygne vntill the tyme of good kyng E|zechias, true holinesse, religion, ryght knowleage of God, yea and the veraye mynde to worke or seke Goddes glorye, lay as a thyng oppressed, reiecte, bu|ryed, and vttrely extyncte, and in stede of Godlinesse reigned al iniquitie: in lieu of true knowlage, all was possessed with ignoraunce and errore: in place of true wurshyppynge of God, so ferre preuayled Idolatrye and contempte of Goddes lawes, that Israell passed the Gentyles not onely in theyr owne gentylitie of wurshypping Baal and many false Goddes, but also in al other kyndes of theyr moste detestable abhominacions. The crafty and subtile iugleyng of Baals priestes, and of the false prophetes for the aduauncyng of their owne lucre and estimacion, had vnder the coulour and pretence of holy|nesse, and of religion, by litle and litle so allured, enueigled, coniured, and bewit|ched the prynces: y^t they were vfferly blynded and seduced to condescende to the wicked and couetous inuencions of the priestes. They perswaded the Princes to theyr waies by policies, they bestowed all theyr cūning clergie, & weorkemā|shyp of peincted eloquence, vntyll they had peruerited them and drawen them clene a straygh from all the wayes of the Lorde theyr true God, well knowyng that the people, some for loue, some for feare, and some through exaūple, woulde without any buisinesse folowe the trace and ledyng of theyr king & gouernour. They made the kynges & rewlers sure on theyr syde, well wetyng that the subiectes, some for obedience sake of theyr owne accorde woulde, and the rest by their cruell diuises myght by tyranny be enforced to drawe after theyr Princes line. Whereof the auncient prouerbe sayeth, that euery kyng is to his royalme and subiectes eyther a singuler precious benefite, oreles a very pernicious destruc|cion, because y^t suche as euery kyng is, suche wil his people bee. Wherfore lyke as a werte or a molle standyng in a bodyes face is a more blemyshe, a greater deformitee, & a wurse disgracing, then if it stode in some priuie place of the body, where eyther the prouidece of nature hideth it, or mānes own reuerēce and good prouision doeth kepe it secrete: so is a vyce or any eiuil qualytie a more fault & a greater dishonour in a Prince, then in an other priuate persone, because that euery his saying; doyng, yea & euery his looke & gesture, is taken vp as a pub|lique exaumple and paterne for all hys subiectes to folowe: so that the kynges of Israel coulde not be ciuill, but to the veraie pernycious ensaumple and cor|rupcion of al theyr sely people. But at length came good kyng. Ezechias, of whom the Scripture in his due commendacion testifieth, that he did that pleased the Lorde in al thyng, lyke to his forefather and progenitour Dauyd.

His well doynges he begonne with the redresse of religion, and the extirpyng of idolatry vp by the rote. For whyle idolatry reigned, nothing could he doe y^e myght be pleasyng to God. Fyrst of all therefore he put awaye the hil alters, & brake the images & cutte downe y^e groues, and all to brake the brasen serpente that Moyses had made. (For vnto those dayes y^e chyldren of Israel dyd burne sacrifice vnto it.^{*}) He trusted in the Lorde God of Israel, he clau^e to the Lorde and departed not from hym, but kepte his commaundementes, and the Lorde was with hym, so that he prospered in all thynges whiche he tooke in hande. &c. Thus, duryng y^e time of his reygne by y^e space of twēty nine yeres, he renewed religion & restored the lawe of God to his perfeccion: he reduced his people to the trade of holy and vpryght conuersacion in the syght of God, of walkyng in the commaundementes of the Lorde, detesting al Idolatrye & abhorryng al suche abomynacions as myght iustely prouoke his wrathe & vengeaunce. All this whyle the subtyl & crafty false prophetes and priestes of Baall dissembled & played mum, they folowed the necessitee of the time, and for feare of the iron rodde, did as the worlde vnder suche a kyng required. But as soone as good kyng Ezechias was once dead, leauyng behynde hym his soonne Manasse, a chylde of twelue yeres olde to reygne by succession ouer Israel in his stede, than the false prophetes and priestes of Baall thought it a fitte and propyes tyme to shewe themselues in theyr owne colours. As soone as by his death a gappe was opened to theyr false iugleyng, to theyr crafty practyse, to their wyly dryfltes, and theyr subtile conueyghaunce, they a•o• shewed theyr affeccions as they were. They leat not slyppe theyr occasion •o reduce Israell to the former trade of dooing sacrifice to the Idolles whiche they had learned in the tyme of wieked Achab, wherby theyr lucre and aduaantage hadde a long season come in thicke, and vnder Ezechias vtterlye decaied, in whose dayes they we• of force compelled to haue the lawe of God in honour, and the same onely to vse and to •eache to the people. In herte priuely they styllye cōtinued most detestable & most pernicyous faourers, maynteyners and weorkers of Idolatrye, though they had for the tyme through hypocrisy and for feare of punishmente intermytted thesame. But y^e youth of Manasse beyng a babe easye to be inticed allured and trayned to the lustes of sensualitie, through flatreyng persuasions, and beeyng destitute of faythfull and godly counsayllours that might and woulde protect his tendre chyldehood, and bryng hym vp in the knowledge of God, in the way of his preceptes, was for the sayde false Prophetes, and couetous priestes of Baall a mete praye. Hym therefore they enueygled w^t many swete woordes of flaterye (doubte ye not) with many woordes of coumforte, with muche circumstaunce of glorious peincted eloquence, with allegeyng of many politique consideracions, with many ciuill respectes of y^e state of the world y^t than was, with many ga•e and solemne promises of innumerable and thesame right high commodities that shoulde thereby ensue to him and his common weale, with many assured warauntises of welth, peace and tranquilitie, if he would vse their counsayl in folowing the wayes of wyse Achab, beyng (as they alleaged) a noble Prynce, and a polityque wise man in folowing y^e trade of his forefathers, & not of such a newefound t•ade of learnyng and religion as Ezechias had lately inuented &

brought vp in Israel, to the great troublyng & disquieting of himself, the grieuous annoiaūce and vexacion of his subiectes, and the extreme perill of his cōmon weale. For Almanazar king of Assyria had in the daies of Ezechias

Page [unnumbered]

come vp agaynst Samaria, and besieged it, and woonne it, and had carried a|waye Israel into Assyria: and after him Sennacheryb kyng of Assyria had cōe vp agaynst all y^e strong cities of Iuda, & had takē them: albeit God by his po|wer deliuered Ezechias & his people & Cities, & the Aūgel of the Lorde slewe of the proud blasphemous braggūīg Assiriās, an hūdred fowre score & fiue thou|sand at a clappe. By these meanes y^e salse prophetes & wicked priestes of Baall coūpace and weigh young Manasse though he succeeded his owne father beyng so good & so godly a kyng as y[•] expresse testimonie of holy scripture cōmendeth w^t these woordes, that after hym was none lyke hym emong all the kynges of Iuda, neyther were there any suche before him: yet y^e not w^tstāding by y^e suger-mouthed false prophetes, & by the couetous priestes of Baall through defaulte of good & godly Counsayllours, whome (doubte ye not but this wieked rable founde meanes to wring out of fauour, & to remoue awaye from the Kynges presence) he was so coumpaced, * weyghed, persuaded, woonne, be wytched, per|uerted & so fo•re seduced: y^t (as the scripture recordeth), he did eiuil in the syght of the Lorde euen after the abominacyons of the heathen. For he went & buylt the hill altares, whiche Ezechias his father had destruied, & he reared vp alters for Baall, & made groues (as dyd Achab Kyng of Israell) and wurshipped all the hoste of heauē and serued them. And he builte alters in the house of the Lorde, of whiche the Lorde had sayd: *In Hierusalem will I putte my name.* And he buylte alters for all the hoste of heauen: euen in twoo Courtes of the Lorde. And he offered his soonnes in fyre, and gae hede vnto witcherafte and sorcery, and mayntayned weorkers with spirites, and tellers of fortunes: and wroughte much wickednesse in y[•] syght of the Lorde to angre hym. And he put an ymage of a groue that he had made, euen in the Temple, of whyche the Lord had saide to Dauid & Salomon his sonne: *in this house and in Hierusalem, whiche I haue chose out of all the tribes of Israell, will I putte my name for euer.* And Manasse led them out of the waye, to dooe more wickedlye then dyd the hethen people, whome the Lorde destroyed from before the chyldren of Israell, and he wrought more wyekedly then all the Amorytes, whiche were before hym, did: and made Iuda also to synne with his Idolles and dyd shed innocent bloude excedyng muche euen tyl he replenished Hierusalem from corner to corner wyth the bloude of the true Prophetes, and of as many as myght be founde to be the true worshypers of God and sincere kepers of y^elawe. After so wicked a father, (who reigned fiftye fyue yeres in Hierusalem) succeeded as wicked a sonne Amon, beyng twēty twoo yeres old whan he begoōne to reigne.* And he lykewyse dyd euill in y^e syght of y^e Lord, as his father Manasse had doen, and

walked in all the waye y^t his father walked in, & serued y^e Idolles that hys father serued, & wurshypped them. And he forsooke the Lorde God of his fathers, and walked not in the waye of the Lord. &c. Whan Amō was deceassed, his soōne Iosias was in his stede made Kyng, * and was but eight yeres olde whan he was enoyncted Kyng. And where he reigned thyrtie one yeres, and begonne to reigne so young: yet (as the scripture plainelye mency oneth) *he did that whiche is right in the sight of the Lorde, and walked in all the wayes of Dauid his forefather, and boughed neither to the ryghte hande ne to the selfe, vn|doubtedlye throughe the speciall grace of God, and the helpe of good Go|uernours, who well consyderynge and ponderynge the vngodlye lyfe and dooynges of Manasse, coulde not of theyr fydelytye fynde in theyr hertes to suffre suche an innocent babe in lyke sort to be seduced and abused as Manasse*

had been, * both to his owne perdition, and also to the vtter desolacion of Ie|rusalem and Iuda: For beholde (sayd the Lorde) because Manasse King of Iuda, hath done suche abhominacyons. &c. I will bryng suche eiuyls vpon Hierusalem and Iuda, that whoso heareth of it, bothe his eares shall tinkle: and I wil wipe out Hierusalem, * as a man wipeth a dish and whan, he hath wiped it, turneth it vpsyde downe. &c. And to Iosias thus aunswereþ the Lorde by the prophetisse in the fowerth of the Kynges: Because thine herte did melte, and because thou hast humbled thy selfe before me the lorde whan thou heardest what I spake against this place. &c. Beholde therfore I wil re|ceiue thee vnto thy fathers, and thou shalt be put into thy graue in peace, and thine iyes shal not see al the eiuils whiche I will bring vpon this place. They were both of them young Kinges, and immediate successors, the one to Eze|chias who had extirped idolatrie by the roote, and the other to a wurshipper of false Gods, & otherwise also a very wicked man: And yet Manasse through peruerse enticers fel from God to all naughtines, and Iosias beeyng younger of age then he, did by the helpe of faythfull and godly Counsaylours, apply himselfe to all goodnes, and thereby prospered. These twoo very notable ex|aumples, moste gracious Soueraygne, I haue some what the more at large propouned and set foorth to your Maiestie: partly that ye may marke and <...> shall of your godly dooynges redounde to youreselfe, youre people, <◊> Royalmes and dominyons, yea and to youre posteritie also for your sake: and partly to declare vnto youre hyghnesse, that nexte to the speciall gifte of Gods grace, to be of your owne good disposicion plynne, flexible, and much enclined to vertue: the chiefe and principall porcion of all suche good happe is to bee ascribed to the discrete gouernaunce, the sal|pient direcccion, the vertuous trayning, the vpright guydying, the godly aduer|tisementes, the holesome admonicions, and the vncorrupt educacion in vertue and litterature ministred vnto a yong king by feithful and woorthy Counsayl|lours. Which thing forasmuch as it so is, how happy & blyssed is your Maiestie of gods owne hande, who hath prouyded your Grace of suche

noble and worthy Counsaylours in this time of your minoritie: and how much are we your most feithful louing subiectes bound to laude, praise and mag|nifie his moste holy name, for that in this so daungerous a tyme he hathe so mercifully & graciously prouided for vs, whose welth and safegard in this worlde must wholly and onely depende of your godly educacion & vertuous trainyng, or our extreme confusion of the contrarye? And certes this your innocent babehood and tendre minoritie, is the veraie time, in which it may euidently be tried what persons dooe feithfully tendre your welth, your ho|nour, and your godly procedinges. They are aboue all precious Iewelles and aboue all worldely treasoures to bee esteemed, loued, regarded, thanked, and folowed of your Maiestie, whiche in thys your mynoritie shewe them|selues feithfull, earnest, diligent and careful▪ not onely as touching the safelgarde and preseruacion of your most Royall persone, but also concernyng your minde in this your tēdre youngth to be furnished with literature, with the due knowlege of God, & with such disciplines as many confirme you in all Princely vertues for your honour, welth and renoume, whan God shall make you a manne of yetes and stature, as your moste noble and moste ho|nourable Counsaylours doe their true and diligent endeavour to make you

Page [unnumbered]

a manne in maniers and learning. Wherein like as Philip King of Mace|donie at the birth of his sonne Alexandre the great, alleged himselfe for two causes principally to reioyce, the one because he had now a sōne borne to suc|cede him in his croune & sceptre, & the other because the same was borne in the time of so noble a Clerke as Aristotle was, to whome the tuicyon, gouer|nance, and instruction of Alexandre, might be committed, so did your most noble father, and so doe al we your most beneuolent subiectes yet stil reioice, that your hap was to be borne hauing two such worthy vncles to serue and assist you, and especially such an one as your most dere vnkle Edward Duke of Somerset is, to whome aswel the gouernaunce and vertuous institucion and training of your most Royal person as also the proteccyon of all your Roialmes and dominions and of al vs your most feithfull louing subiectes during the time of this your minority, might be safly committed. Of whose fidelitie now a long season aswel in King Henries time as sence the begin|ning of your Maiesties most noble and victorious Reigne throughly tried, and the same aswel in peace as also in soondry warres approued, neither at home only, but also both in fraunce & Scotland more then once or twise delclared: of whose dexterity aswell in marcial feaftes as also in ciuile affaires, and in ordring of the common weale: of whose fortunate and luckie sped in al his worthy enterpryses: of whose happye and prosperous successe in all thinges that he taketh in hande: of whose passyng great clemencye & mode|racy on towardes all people in euerye behalfe: of whose prudence in all ciuill matiers: of whose feithful and vigilaunte administracion vnder your Maiestie in your common weale: of whose indifferencie in al causes of iustice to be ministred to your people: of whose most vpright integrity not

onely in ci|uil counsayles, but also in matiers of religion for the worde of God purely & sincerely to be set forth to Gods glory, and to the welth and honour of your Emperial croune and dignitie, though no manne is hable to say ouermuch: yet wil I rather absteyne to say that I coulde and iustly might doe, then I will fill his eares with the troumpe of his owne particular prayses, whiche I knowe hym to bee nothyng desirous ne willing to heare. Onely I shall pray almyghtie God (as al Englande and your other dominions with pub|lique and the same vnceassaunt prayers doe) to preserue and kepe him, vntil such time as your Maiestie being growen to full manstate and absolute dis|crecion, may rewarde him with condigne thankes for his long and the same most feithful and diligent seruice, and the same thing also to doe vnto al the other your moste noble and godly Counsaylours. For the blisfull state that your Maiestie endeuoureth and daily trauayleth with their assent & consent to set this your Empiere in, enforceth as many as loue either you or God, daily to breake out into this acclamacion: O happy King, of suche worthy Counsaylours, and o happy Counsaylours of such a toward King. Neither doe we your most benevolent subiectes any thing doubte, but that your Maiesties godly beginninges so prosperously and earnestly to set foorth Gods worde and glory, shal dayly more and more occasyon al Christian kinges & princes not onely to spoyle the Romishe Egipt by resuming euery one his owne most due & tightful title of supreme head within his own Royalmes & dominions, & by abolishing y^e vsurped primacie of the papacie of Rome with al the Antichristian tradicions issuing from the same, but also in publishing

the pure and sincere worde of God to theyr peoples and subiectes euery one. And than is it not to be doubted, but that Christian loue, peace, vnitie, and concorde, whiche hath long and many yeres through the malicious practisng of the See of Rome been exiled & banished from al parttes of Christen|dome, shall vniuersally in a momente returne agayne to the great glory of God, to the quieting of the worlde, to the benefite of all Christen common weales, and to the confusion & discoumfeightyng aswell of the Turkes, as also of al other the enemies of God and good people. And within your Maiesties Royalmes and dominions it is in the meane time nothing to be mis|trusted, but that by your most gracious prouision, such knowlage of Gods worde shal grow, that your people shal be to al others a perfect ensaumple of all godly conuersacyon and behaueour. And where Ezechias and Iosias mayntayned true religion and the vpright wurshipping of God, but either for his owne time & no lenger, I trust your Grace shal confirme & establish it for euer in the hertes and bowels of all youre most tendre louing subiectes. Wheruto certes there cannot be any so ready or sure a way, as by publishing the holy scripture & gospel of Christ & by establishing the vse therof through most holesome ordeinaūces, statutes, lawes, iniuncions, sincere preachers, most godly omelies, and exposicions, in the vulgare toung. And in this behalfe, if common writers in trifling profane matiers do with much high suit make meanes to obteine and vse the fauourable

acceptacion of Princes, vnder whose name, title, & proteccion any such weorke may be the more com|mended and the better habled vnto the readers: how much are we al bound to your highnes, who of your own mere good zele and of your own accorde, doe willingly set forth in the English toun such fruictfull bookes wherby all your people may bee edified in religion. Emong which verely I knowe not any one booke, whome for this purpose of briefly, pithily, sincerely, and familiarely expounding the new testament, I may iustly compare, or at leste wise preferre to thys presente Paraphrase of Erasmus, whiche lyke as the moste vertuous ladie Quene Katerine late wife of your moste noble father, and now of your ryghte derebeloued vnkle Syr thomas Seimour knight, Lorde Seimour of Sudley, and high admyrall of your Seaes, did ryght graciously procure to be translated into our vulgare toun, so your Maiestie more graciously hath by your most godly iniuncciōs willed to be read, vsed, and studied by euery curate and pryste to the vndoubted edifying aswell of them, as of all other that with a desyre to knowe God, shall eyther reade or heare the same. For as a wynnower powereth the chaffe from the corne, and the boulter tryeth out the bran from the mele: so hath Erasmus scoured out of all the Doctours and commentaries vpon Scrypture, the dregges which through the faute of the times or places, in whiche those wri|ters liued, had settled it selfe amonge the pure & fine substaunce: he hath triled out the refuse that cleued in any the weorkes of such as wrote whan the doctrine began by patchyng & clokyng to decline to insynceritie: the trashe and bagguage stuffe that through papistical tradicions had founde a waye to crepe in, this man hath sifted out frō the right doctrine: so that aswel in al other his most clerkely wrytinges, as also most spacyally in these his Paraphrases vpon the newe testament so auncientely wryten as cannot be emen|ded he bringeth in and briefly compriseth the pith of a•l the myndes and me|ninges

Page [unnumbered]

of all the good Doctours of y^e churche, that euer wrote. In iustifica|cion of feith, in honouring God onely, in repentaunce & puritie of a Christen mans life, in detesting of imagery and corrupte honouring of Sainctes, in opening and defacing the tiranny, the blasphemie, Hipocrisie, the ambition, the vsurpacion of the See of Rome, in noting the abuses of al the abhomi|nable sectes and rables of counterfei•te religions & idle cloisters, in bewra|ing the iugling sleightes and fine practise of poperie, in choice of meates, in esteming the differēce of daies, in manifesting of vaine ceremonies vnder the coulour and pretence of holynesse crept into Christes churche, in reprehendi|ng pilgrimages with al circūstances of ydolatrie and supersticion, in de|scribing of a Princes office, in teachyng obedyence of the people towardes their rulers and Gouernours, in declaring of a pastours duetie, in shewing the parte of an Euāgelical preacher, and what or how his doctrine ought to be out of the Scriptures, in blasing the Antichristiā deccrees of poperie vn|der the name of tradicions & constituciōs of our mother church, in decising the right difference betwene the spirite and the lettre, and finally in al

other poinctes or articles of our religion, hauing now of late yeres ben in controuersie, Erasmus like as he is no where ouer vehement, so is he euery where both sincere and ful. Neither doeth any wryter more wittily, more earnestly, more ap•ly, more finely, more substauncially, more piththily, or more playnely describe & peyncte out the vsurped estate, preeminence, and pompe of the bishope of Rome, then he doth: aswel in all other places where iust occasion offereth it selfe, as also directly (though vnder a preaty couloure) in the eleuenth chapitour of the Euangelist Marke. Erasmus ferthermore is won|dreful in comparing of fygures of the olde testamente, in applying of alle|gories, in declaring of parables, in discussing of doubtful questions, in ser|ching and explicating of profound mysteries, wherin he euidently declareth himselfe, that he was a man of an excellent witte, of much study, of exquisit learning, of profounde knowelage, of an exact iudgemente, of notable dili|gence, of woorthy & famous industrie, of singular peinefulnes, of an encom|parable memorie, & of an vnestimable zele towardes y^t setting furth of Chri|stes most holy gospel. And yet doth he with such prudence and semely circū|speccion so tēper his stile, that his very enemies (as he cannot lacke enemies enough whosoeuer wil be an opener & teller of y^etrueth in matiers of religiō, he cānot lacke enuie of Satans brode, whosoeuer wil endeavour himselfe to ferther the knowlage of Gods word, he cannot lacke neither priuie backebilting nor yet open reproche to slaundre him, to bring him out of credit, to de|face him, to trede him vnder foote, whosoeuer wil be diligent to help bring the gospel to light▪ he shal not auoide to be opēly burdened with false crimes whereby he may be vttrely diffamed, whosoeuer wil trauaile to manifest the glory of Christes bloud: he shal haue enough to write & speake against him, whosoeuer wil attempt to discouer the iugling castes & practise of poperie:) his very enemies (I say that hated him because they hated the veritie, could neuer yet finde how to geue him any foile, or how to take thaduantage of a|ny such holde against him, whereby to confound his doctrine. Neuertheles whan I do in my mind make a comparison of you three together, Erasmus in writing this Paraphrase, Quene Katerine in procuring y^e same to be tur|ned into English, and your highnes in publishing the same by your godly

iniunccions to bee had in vse throughout all parties of thys Royalme, me semeth I do wel note Erasmus to haue doen the lest act of the three. For E|rasmus fact did helpe onely such as are sene in latin: the Quenes goodnesse extendeth to the help of the vnlearned also which haue more nede of helping forward: and your Maiesties benefit it is▪ that maketh so precious a trea|sour cōmon to as many as may take profit or fruict thereby. And in dede no Christian Prince there is, to whome the tuicion, proteccion, & stablishing of any such bookees or weorkes, as concerne the pure setting forth of Christ and his gospel, doeth so aptely or so duely apperteine, as to your most excellent Maiestie, to whome by a most iust

and right deuolucion, and discente of in|heritaunce of the crounes of England, Fraunce, and Ireland, the title also of Defēdour of the feith, doth most nerely, most peculiarely, most specially, and most directly belong. Now as touching the translatours of such bookes as this, although I haue at this present the lesse to say, because I my selfe haue in a small porcion of this weorke filled one roume of some other man that might haue ben hable to do it better then I haue doen: yet can I not but wish that emong so many your Maiesties moste •umple & bount•ous exhi|bicions, & so many other godly actes to be doen as are daily brought & offred to the gracious direcciō of your highnes, of your most dere•vnclē being Go|uernour of your Royal person during thys time of your minoritie, & vnder your Maiestie our protectour, and of the other your most honourable Coū|saillours this thing also might be peferred to your consideracions, how ne|cessarie a thing it were, that some hable, worthy and mete persons for doing such publique benefite to the cōmon weale as translating of good weorkes, and writing of Cronicles, might by some good prouision and meanes haue some condigne sustentacion in the same. For what Royalme almost (Englād excepted) hath not al y^e good authours that euer wrote trāslated into the mo|ther tong, whereby the people are made prudent and expert men in the tract of all affaire•, either touching any discipline or els any ciuile matiers? And in Germany, what good weorke of diuinitie is there, which they haue not in their own lāguage to the vnestimable edifying of the people in y^e due know|lage of God? For what hath ben or is in any common weale the foundacion of spreading abrode the knowlage of Goddes woerde, but onely the setting forth of the Bible with other good and godly tractises for the declaracion of the same? What thing hath y^e whelpes of y^e Romish Antichrist so fiercely all|waies backed against, as at the translating of Scripture and other bookes cōcerning matiers of religion into the vulgare tong for the vse of y^e people? What any one thing is there, against the whiche there hath in all Christen Royalmes (as long as it might preuayle) been eyther sorer decrees, lawes, or inhibicions ordeined, or more terrible execucion of all kindes of tormentes and deathes inuented, deuised and put in vre, then againste the setters foorth of bookes concernyng religyon? What one thing hath papistry in all countreyes more eagrely conspired, more subtelly coumpaced, or more earnestly practised to oppresse: then the coming foorth of Scripture and o|ther diuine weorkes in the vulgare tong, whereof the rude multitude might gather knowlage? Against what thing hath there in these laste yeres, vntill Christ (like fier being hidden vnder wood) would nedes mounte vp and ap|pere abrode maugre y^e head of the Romish Pharao & al his tiranny, against

what thing (I say) hath there been eyther more sorer thundreboltes shot, of deprauing, of accursing, of slaundreing, of defacing, of condemning, and of burning: then against bookes of scripture matiers, trāslated or writen in the

mother lāguage, & against the autours of the same? Until the Bible & other good traitises for y^e explanaciō of y^e same wer in Christian regions turned & set forth in the vulgare languages: what kind of idolatry, supersticiō, pope|rie, errorr, ignorance, or counterfeict religion, did not reigne? As long as the candel light of the gospel was kepte hidden vnder the bushell: what King, what Prince, what countrey, what people did not the blind popish guides lede (as one that is blindfolde may be led) till both fel in the pit? But whan and whersoeuer it hath pleased God by his special mercy, grace, & prouidēce to shew open the light of the gospel and true doctrine: there hath at once all popish troumperie euen of it selfe vanished away, as a mist is dispersed with the heate of the sonne, as smoke is consumed in the aier, as duste is blowen and scattered abrode with a puffe of winde, as the nyght geueth place to the bright day, and as darkenes vanisheth at the clere light of the sūne. Contra|riewise where the worde of God can not yet geat any entrie to take place, ne the bookes of holy Scripture obtein to be published to the people, what iye doth not see, and what Christian hert doth not lament and blede, to consider in what blindnes, supersticion, errorr, vnquietnes of consciēce and trouble of minde, the sely people doe liue? It is therfore no smal benefite that suche persons do to a common weale, which are willingly trauaillers in this kind of writing. For as for newe bookes of trifling vanities and profane argu|mentes we nede none, there are daily so many writen: but to haue such weor|kes made common to the publique vse of y^e vnlearned multitude, as are the principal best, & haue ben written by noble Clerkes of vndoudted learning, knowlage, and godlines, therin consisteth such a publique benefite, as (if I should not now be suspected & demed to hunt for my selfe) is in mine estima|cion, worthy publique thankes and regarde. For (as Erasmus in his third booke of Apothegmes, aswel by a sapient aunswere of Socrates, as also by two other preatie stories, the one of Leonicenus and thother of William Warham late Archbishop of Cantorbury doeth declare) muche more good, and a much greater benefit to a common weale doeth such an one, as trans|lateh or composeth any frui•tful booke or traictise, which by going abrode throughout a whole Royalme may profit all pastours, curates studentes, & al people vniuersally: then any man is hable to do by preaching teaching, or geuing instruccions to one cōpany alone, or in one place or countrey & no mo, though he should neuer so rightly, neuer so diligētly, or neuer so cūningly doe the same. Now besides that such a translatour trauaileth not to hys own priuate commoditie, but to the behoufe & publique vse of his countrey: besides that the thing is such as must so throughly occupie and possesse the dooer, and must haue him so attent to apply that same exercise onely, that he may not during that season take in hande any other trade of busines where|by to purchase his liuing: besides that the thing cannot be doen without be|stowing of long time, great watchyng, muche peines, diligente studye, no small charges aswell of meate, drinke, and bookes, as also of other necessa|ries, the labour selfe is of it selfe a more painful and a more tedyous thyng, then for a manne to wryte or prosecute any argumente of hys owne inuen|cion.

A man hath hys owne inuencion readie at his owne pleasure without lettes or stoppes to make suche discourse as his argument requireth: but a translatour must of force in manier at euery other worde staigh, and suspend both his cogitaciō and his penne to looke vpon his autour, so that he might in equal time make thrise so muche, as he cā be hable to translate. But wheſter of both a man shal apply hymſelf to doe, he can in the meane while dooe nothing els, he cannot-duryng the season bestow himſelfe on any other occulſaciō for his liuing, & his necessities & also charges in the meane time neuer|theleſſe dooe growe aswel as other mennes. Wheroſ it cometh to pasſe, that a noumber of ſuſhe as would be right willing and diligent to dooe good in the commō weale with this kinde of ſeruice: yet through defaulte of neceſſarie maintenaunce, cannot: and certain that hath both liuing & vacaunt time enough, for as muche as they ſee the paines of this traule ſo great, the hyre nothing at al, and the capciousnes of ſome maligners againſt the trueth, ſo readie to depraue the diligent laboure of ſtudious writers: are for the moſte parte of thē better contented (according to the accuſtomed prouerbe) to plaie for naught then to weorke for naught. And by this meanes lye almoſte all good bookeſ hidden from the people, & al disciplines vñknownen. But thus hauing vnder the gracious ſufferaunce & correction of your Maiestie ſhewled my poore opinion, I ſu•ceſſe any ferther to traict of this mater, leſte I myght ſeme to ſpeake as myne owne frende, whiche in dede I doo not, in ſo muche that hauyng your Maiesties benigne fauoure therunto, I mind and entende no leſſe, then al my life enduring either in wryting or translating, to employe my ſimple talente, according to the porcion whiche it haſe pleased almighty god to meaſure vnto me: Albeit in this preſent weorke, nothing it is that I doo or iuſtely maye take vnto me as mine acte, ſauing the translaſcion of the paraphraſe vpon Luke, and the diſteſting and placing of the text throughout all the ghospelles, and the actes (except the ghospel of Marke) to thentent the vñleaſned readers maye perceyue where & how the procesſe & circūſtaunce of the paraphraſe aunſwereth to y^e teſte, & how it ioineth ther|with. Which my rude & groſſe doyng if it may please your highneſſe for the reſpecte of my good wil and honest zele to pardon (for as for thanke I con|fesse my ſelfe to haue worthyly deserued none for ſo rude a thing:) your Maiestyes benigne & gracious fauour ſhall be vnto me ſuſhe an encouraging & ſpurre towardes ferther industrie: that emōg the riche iewelles of other bet|ter learned mennes ſtudies, who haue aboūdaunce of treaſoures to cōferre & bestowe to the publ•que edifiyng of the ignoraunt people, I ſhall at no time be ſlacke euen of my penurie and ſcarcitie to bring my poore ferthing alſo, & to caſt it into the cōmon boxe of helpyng the ignoraūt multytude towardes more knowelage of god. For truly there is none ſo good, ſo ſure, ne ſo ready a waye to plante the knowelage of God in mennes hertes, to engrauē in mē true loue & obedience towardes their Princes and rewlers, to rote vp idolaſtrie & ſuperſticiō out of mēnes ſtomaskeſ, to bring the people in y^e good mind to deteſt & abhorre al kinde of naughtines, to bring al folkeſ to a perfeiſt ſeſcurtie of cōſciēce in Christes bloud, to reduce the people to an vpright trade of Christian religion: as to fede their gredie houngre and thirſt of Christes righteousnes, with

the Bible, with such godly omilies, and with this pa|raphrase and other like
bokes of wholsom doctrine, as your Maiesties zele

Page [unnumbered]

and deuociō towardses god hath alreadie moued you to do. For of this yong and
grene foundacion being yet very newly laied, thus much good edifying hath
already growen in all persons consciences: that blasphemie, periurie, mourdre,
thefte, whoordome, making of affraies, and other abhominacions are more
detested, then they were in the blinde worlde very late yeres gone: which is a
token, that Christ beginneth to dwel emōg vs. For as Christ gro|weth, so shal vice
weare away. And by equal degrees shal the loue of vertue and the hatered of vice
grow in our hertes. A great mayny that haue hated matrimony, and yet haue not
hated fornicacion, inceste, and aduoutry, begin now to abhorre and manifestly to
flee these and other like pestilences, and to exercise the contraries. Which thing
if some persones shal percase deny, and affirme to be otherwise, truely in mine
opinion it is not so, but because it is in so great a numbre emended, looke where
suche corrupcion stil remayneth, there doeth it better and more notably appere,
as straunge thinges are com|monly more wondred at. For al good and godly
folke doe now wondre, that, Gods worde being spred abrode & being now
almoste in euery bodies hand and mouth so common, there should be any
creature in whome any of the e|normities afore mentioned shoulde reigne. But
by Goddes grace and your Maiesties most holsome prouision it is to be hoped,
that through this salve of Goddes woorde, and other deuoute weorkes for
declaracion of the same sette foorth to the people, if any shepe eyther be
scabby, or els doe yet ren a|straygh: the same shall by the right ledyng of the
head belle weather theire Prince, and by the whystle and voyce of their good
Pastours, be reduced to suche a concorde & vuniformitie, that they wil full and
whole goe the streight pathway of Christes doctrine, vntil (according to his
promisse) there shal of vs al be but one folde, and one shepheheard, as your
most excellent Maiestie by setting forth suche bookes as may edify your people
of all states and delgrees in the knowlage of goddes woorde & in innocencie of
life doth labour to haue it. Whiche your godly purpose and desire (if I may with
your gracious pardone saye myne opinyon) I verayly suppose that no creature
is of suche wicked herte to hindre, except if any such there be, (whiche thing God
of his great mercy and grace forbid) that would not with his good wil haue your
highnesse so wel to prosper, flourish, and growe, as to the honoure and glory of
God, to the coumfort and reioysing of all your wel willers, to the terroure and
drede of all your foes, and to the welth and honoure of all your Royalmes and
dominions (God be thanked) ye nowe dooe. And doubt you not moste excellent
Souveraygne, but that so long as your Maiestie by the aduise and assistance of
your sayde most dere vncle and the other your moste honourable Counsailours,
shall tendrely seke and setforth Gods glory, fra|mning and trayning your people to
walke in his preceptes: so long wil God prosper you in all affaires, who can no
more be false of his promisse, then he can ceasse to bee God. If ye reade the fifth

chapitour of Iosue, and the fifth chapitour of Iudith, (besydes many places moe aswell in the bookes of the kinges, as also in other bookes of the Scriptures) ye shal plainly finde how merueilously God protected, saued, prospered, and preserued the people of Israel, so long as they walked in his preceptes truely & sincerely wurship|ping him and keping his lawes, againste all the force and vyonc[e] of all their enemies, were they neuer so innumerable, neuer so puissaunt, neuer so

well appoynted for battayl, nor neuer so fierce. In the fifth chapitour of Iudith emong other notable testimonies of Gods tendrenes ouer Israel, and by their example ouer al such as truely serue him, it is conteined, that whan worde came to Holofernes, Prince and Captain general of the warre of the Assirians vnder the king Nabugodonozor, how the children of Israel prepared themselves, to make resistance against him and his armie Royal, and he demaunded many questions of the Princes of Moab & of the Captaines of Ammon concerning the power of the Israelites: Achior the Captaine of all the Ammonites, whan he had in a long processe declared vnto Holofernes how wōdrefully Israel, whan they truly serued god, had euermore from tyme to tyme been preserued, and had preuayled againste all their enemies, and contrarie wyse howe God had alwayes plagued them whansoeuer they fell from hym to wurshippe false Goddes: thus doeth he conclude and knitte vp his oracion. Therefore my lorde (sayth he) make diligent inquisic[i]on: If this people haue doen wickednes in the sight of their God, than lette vs goe vppe against them. For doubtlesse their God will deliuer them into thy handes, and subdue them vnto thy power. But yf this people haue not displeased their God, we shall not be hable to withstand them. For their God will defend them, and so shal we be a shame to al the worlde. &c. I ther|fore with all tendrenes of herte, beseche almighty God that this your godly purpose of setting forth the worde & glory of god, (wherunto his moste holy spirite, first moued your most noble father, and hath now more strongly and effectually wrought thesame in your Maiestie,) may neuer slacke. And than I nothing doubt, but that, according to the most earnest and the same vn|ceassaunt prayers, not onely of all vs your most feithful louing subiectes, but also of all other good and godly people, he shal in al thinges most prosperously continue your most noble and most gracious Reigne ouer vs, pou|ring and heaping into you, as into a vessel of singular prerogatiue peculiarely chosen, the right & true administracion of his lawes and of your com|mon weale, which by hys special grace he gaue vnto Moses and vnto Iosue: the like testimony of feithfulnes^{*} and of being a manne chosen after his owne hert, which he gaue vnto king Dauid: the singular gift of wisedome richesse, magnificence, and renoume, wherwith he notably aboue al others endewed king Salomon: the fortunate and prosperous successe in battayl (if necessitie of war must come vnto you) that he sente vnto Abia: no lesse in|tegritie and purenes of liuing ioyned with effectual taking a way of super|sticion, then the scripture reporteth

of good king Asa: the same grace to set your people in good ordre, and to constytute echewhere within youre Royalmes and dominions, prudent, vpright, and discrete Magistrates to milnister iustice, and to haue God with you in al affaires therfore, as we reade of noble king Iosophat: the like prosperitie and continuaunce of most victorius reigning that God sent vnto Ioathan king of Israel: the like addicilon of yeres to your natural tyme, * that Ezechias had: and finally the luckie and prosperous olde age, which God gaue vnto Abraham, with semblable happe for propagacion of sede for your succession by suche a noble Sara as may be a condigne spouse to be coupled with so noble a King. Wherunto al true Englishe heartes that shall fortune to reade or heare these presentes I doubte not wil with one voyce saye. Amen.

To the Ientle christian reader Nicolas Udal wisheth health, grace, and peace in God
the father, and in hys sonne Iesu Christ our salueour

T

Hou hast here, good Christiā reader, the paraphrase of Eras|mus vpon y^e gospel, that is to say, a treasour & in manier a ful library of all good diuinitie bookes. For whatsoeuer thing any of the auncient doctours of the church left behind him, whatsoeuer in any catholike writer is conteined, whatsoeuer any notable good exposytoure hath sette foorth for the sincere & playne de|claracion of the new testament: the pith and substance therof hath this man with a clerky iudgment compendiously and briefly, as it were in a summe, couched together in this one weorke. Neither was there euer any weorke so easy to be vnderstāded of the reader, which hath more cunning shewed in it, as by his owne annotacions vpon his trāslacion of the new testament it may euidently appere, in which annotacions he approueth & declareth himselfe with such diligent obseruacion and marking to haue perused al libraries, al writers, al bookes: as very few studentes dooe vse to reade and labour any one autour in any one particuler facultie or discipline. Accepte this autour therfore, deuout reader, and with glad wil embrase so profitable a meane & instrumēt, wherby thou maist (without any ferther trauail then onely reading marking, & bearing it away,) so easily attain to the clere vnderstanding of y^e gospel. Reade it with a pure & a charitable hert & with a single iye void of al maner parcialitie of affeccion or of enuy: & thou shalt espy therin such edify|ing, as may be mete for thy state of knowlage & aptitude or capacitie, what euel it be. For like as in y^e most holy & blissed testamēt there is both pappe for yoūg•inges in the feith & in the knowlage of Gods worde, and also sounde meate for such as are wel entred & hable to broke higher thinges: euen so in this auctour, are al thinges aptly tempered to enduce & traine the grosse & the rude multitude aswel of Curates & teachers▪ as also of other priuate realders: to fede y^e weake with such doctrine as they are hable to receiue: to shar|pen and make eagre such as are hungrie of ferther knowlage: & to minister vnto the learned or eloquēt teachers, matier sufficiēt wheron to groūd much profōud & the same right Christiā doctrine. Accept it willingly & rendre thā|kes first to God, who of his infinite mercy & grace hath in these our daies sēt such a numbre of suche good writers (and emong them Erasmus as one of the chiefe and principal) not onely to geue clere light, but also to open a way vnto the pure & perfeict knowlage of Gods worde: and than to your moste excellent Soueraine good king Edward the sixte, who emong the other his most princely and most Christian actes, doeth so soone and so effectuallly belgyn first with the promoting of Gods worde and glory, being the fountain and ground of al good successe, welth, and prosperitie: and thirdly to Quene Katerine by whose good meanes and procurement this present weorke hath been by soondry mennes labours turned into our vulgare toun, wherby the kinges Maiestie, (whose principal desire & trauail is to doe all thinges

possible, wherby his most tēdredly beloued subiectes knowlage may be ferthe|red, their conscience slaughtered in a sincere doctrine of Christ, with a perfect framing & confirming of the same in a good conuersacion of life,) might by hauing so notable a good matier in redinesse be the better occasioned to put forth so fruitful an exposicion of the gospel. For a paraphrase is a plain settlēing forth of a text or sentence more at large, with such circumstaunce of moe and other wordes, as may make the sentence open, cleare, plaine, & familiar, whiche otherwise should perchaunce seme bare, vnfruitful harde, straunge •ough, obscure, & derke to be vnderstandinge of any that were either vnlear|ned or but meanly entred. And what is this, but a kinde of exposiciō, yea and that of the most p••hthie and effectual sorte? How muche therefore art thou bound deuout christian reader, (and especially ye priestes, and Curates that either haue not ben brought vp in studie of letters & of diuinitie, or els haue not such store of booke, as may be sufficiēt for mainteininge of your studies) how much are al ye bound (I say) vnto the kinges moste exellent Maiestie and his most honorable & worthy Counsaillours, who of a speciall regarde and cōsideracion of the ignorāuce & defaute of litterature (which hath reig|ned in most part of y^e Clergie of England aswel to y^e great detriment, harme and decay of religion in the christian flockes to their spiritual charge cōmit|ted, as also to their owne intolerable peril and daungier, whan at the general day of accoumpt and audite to be made at the throne of God, it shall bee required at their handes how and what they haue taught to the ignoraunt multitude, for whose solles (as touching their institucion in the feith & in the lawes of God) they must answer before a rightful iudge, whome no mā shal be hable to corrupt, beguile deceiue, or escape) haue by their most good poli|cie founde a meanes, howe both ye and all the people may with a great dele lesse time, study, labour, yea & also charges, then were won•e to be bestowed in playing at tables, boules, cardes, & other vnlawful games, haue in a few leaues a whole library of good doctrine, both for the priuate edifying of eue|ry one particularely, and also for the enstruccion & teaching of eche other in common. Whatsoeuer ignoraunt person is desirous of knowlage, & can be contēted to learn: whosoeuer is not of an hert so indurate but y^t he can abide such good booke, as may further Christes doctrine, whosoeuer is not of an extreme malignaunt stomake against the due setting foorth of Gods worde: whosoeuer is not such an enemie to y^e glory of God, that he enuieth the bene|fit of Christes bloud vnto England: whosoeuer is not eyther of such blind|nesse that he cannot see the trueth, or of such peruerse & froward malice that he wil not, or of such canard obstinacie that he wil against the spirite and a|gainst his conscience wilfully withstand & resist al good thinges which may induce men to the knowlage of God: whosoeuer doth not hate the light of y^e gospel: whosoeuer is in his herte a fauourer of the trueth, and of the kinges Maiesties most godly proceedinges, hath no lesse cause but to embrace Eras|mus, whose doctrine the most & best parte of al Christiā Royalmes & vniuer|sities hath euermore allowed & iudged to be consonaūt to the truth, &

also is boūd with immortal thankes to pray for the kinges most excellēt Maiestie, for this his most gracious setting forth & publishing this present weorke to the vse of such as haue nede therof. And where the sayd Erasmus fer other|wise then a great nūbre of y^e scholastical sorte, & other vnlettred expositours

of these last blind seasons, hath written these his paraphrases in as ornate a stile as he hath the most parte of hys other volumes: is not (as some barba|rous bloundreers haue for safegard & defence of their owne poore honesties alleged) a thing vnseming for bookes of holy scripture matiers. For diuini|tie like as it loueth no cloking, but loueth to be simple and playn, so doth it not refuse eloquēce, if the same come without iniurie or violacion of y^e truth. For who writeth more ornately then the Greke diuines, Basilius, Gregorie Nazianzene, Theophilactus, Chrisostome? or who in laten more elegauntly than Lactancius• Hierome, and diuers others? Albeit in this English paral|phrase the translatours haue of purpose studied rather to write a plain stile, then to vse their elegācie of speche, partly because there cānot in al pointes be expressed in the English tong the grace that is in the laten, much lesse (of my self I speake) the plesauntnesse that is in the stile of Erasmus, a man of moste excellēt learnyng and exquisite eloquence in this kinde (thoughe in dede not altogether a Ciceronian, but yet feact, plesaunt, swete, elegaunt, & sensible) & partly because there was a special regarde to be had to the rude and vnlettred people, who perchaunce through default of atteigning to the high stile, should also thereby haue been defrauded of the profit and fruct• of vnderstanding the sence, which thing that they might doe, was the onely pourpose why it was first translated, and now by the kinges most excellent Maiestie willed to be read. For as for the learned are hable enough to helpe themselves without any translacions at al. Neither are these translacions to be depraued, because some reader would perhaps otherwise haue turned sōe thinges then he shal here rede it. For no two enterpreters there bee, that in translating out of any one tong into an other, would agree in al pointes of stile or enditing, as (best for this purpose) it may appere by the auncient fa|thers of the Churche, whose allegaciones of places of holy Scripture, moste commonly varie in wordes, & agree not but in sense. And the same interpre|ter that would haue translated some part hereof better thē it now is, would in some other poinctes perchaunce haue doen i|wurse. Therefore euerie mā ientilly take and interprete an others labours, & beare with his infirmitie, if not in consideracion of his studie & trauail, yet at lestewise for respect of his good zele & godly entente to ferther knowlage. If it come to the handes of suche as can and wil without disdeigne or arrogancie take his penne and e|mend any thing that his good and vncorrupt iudgement shal see mete to be corrected: I suppose that besydes the rewarde of God, & the publique than|kes of his countrey, he shal also priuatly deserue and receiue immortal thā|kes of the translatours, whose desire is to haue it wel. Neither do I suppose any to be of such mind that he would disdeigne or be greued to see his thing

bettered, as in this great weorke some thinges are in dede here & there other wise penned, then the firste translatours wrote it. For thys is a common weorke of building, to the which are hired many sondry men of occupacion: and in case some man be making a doore, a windoore, or a frame: though an other of the same occupacion put his hande to the bettering and perfeicting of it, yet is not the so dooyng any displeasure, nor cause of grutche to the oþer: but rather a beautifyng of his dooing· & a cause of rendreing thankes to the partie that of good wille and zele without presumpcion, did put hys helping hande to a good purpose. And sembleably in this commō weorke of

Page xv

the gospels vineyarde (for asmuch as euery labourer hath his iye directed to the onely marke of setting foorth the glory of God, and hys moste holy worde,) no man meaneth any rebuke or derogacion to his felow, whan he e|mendeth something that was to be refourmed or altered: but rather semeth to craue the like help of the other agayn in his owne doinges, because it is euident that any man can ferther see, and can be a more indifferent iudge in an other mannes doinges, then he can be in his owne. Geuing ther|fore firste laude, prayse, and thankes to God for all his giftes, and than to our moste excellent king Edwarde the sixth for so gracious accepting, fauouring, and mainteining honest and godly studies: leat euery man employ his good talentes that God hath geuen him, to the publique vse of seruing and prof·ting his countrey, & to the common edifying eche of other in Iesus Christe our Lorde: to whom together with the father and with the holy ghoste, be all honour laude, and glorye worlde without ende.

Amen

Page [unnumbered]

To the moste vertuous Ladie Quene Katerine, late wife to the moste noble, and moste victorious king, Henry the eight of most famous memorie, Nicolas Udal your moste humble seruaunt wisheth health, grace, and consolacion in our Lorde Iesus Christe euerlastyng.

WHere your excellent highnesse, moste gracious Quene Katerine, sen•e the time of your firste calling to the estate and dignitie of espousal & mariage with the moste noble prince that euer reigned, King Henry the eight, hath neuer ceassed by all possible meanes that in you might lie, to minde, to aluaun•e, and to encrease the publique commoditie and be|nefit of this common weale of Englande: I finde on euery side so great• and the same so worthy matier of gratulacion, and thankes geluyng vnto God, that I cannot tell on whose parte fyrste to commence and begynne the same: whether on your owne behalfe, whome God of his good|nesse did for your singular and thesame most notable vertues, without any your expectacion or hope, soodainly putte in Kyng Henries mynde to chose, call, and auaunce to the dignitie and estate of a Quene: or on kyng Henries partie, whose good happe it was, so aptly to choose suche an one as shoulde afterwarde bee a feithfull and continuall coadiutrice vnto hym, in all hys moste deuoute and godly procedinges concerning the knowleage of God and his woerde to bee sette foorth to the people: or els for Englandes cause, to whose publique benefite and edifying in true religyo•, all these your vn|c•assaunte peynes and trauayles doe finally redounde. Leauyng therefore the prosecucion of so large a mattier as neither my slendre witte can wel con|tryue, nor my rude penne is hable to wielde: I shall at thys presente onely thanke God in you, & you in God, for causing these Paraphrases of Desiderius Erasmus of Roterodame vpon the newe testament to be translated into Engilshe, for the vse and commoditie of such people, as with an earnest zeale, and with deuout study, doe houngre and thirst the simple and playne knowlage of Goddes worde: not for contencious bableing, but for innocent liuing: not to be curious searchers of the high misteries, but to be feithfull executours and doers of Goddes biddinges: not to bee troubleous talkers of the Byble, but sincere folowers of Goddes preceptes therein conteined: not to bee vnreuerent reason•rs in holy scriptue, for vain setting out of the•r peincted sheathe: but to bee humble and lowly weworkers of Goddes glorie: not to bee curyous dysputers in the ghospell for the defence and maynte|naunce of theyr inordinate lustes and carnall lybertie, but to bee vpryghte walkers in holy conuersacyon of lyfe in the rule of the ghospell prescrybed. Which kinde of doctrine, forasmuch as no one wryter hath laboured in all poynctes and behalves more vncorruptely or more playnely to ministre vnto the symple reader, then thys authour by a perpetuall dyscourse and conti|nuacion of the texte doeth: your highnes vndoubtedly in procuring the same

to be turned into English, hath not onely after a most godly sorte bestowed your charges: but also hath in the thingselfe doen vnto the commen weale a benefit by so many degrees surmounting and passing any other act of your great largesse and benignitie, as the soule is better then the body, as spirituall edifying is aboue temporal supportacion, as gostly foode and coumforte excedeth corporall relieve or cherishing, and as heauenly treasours excell all worldely giftes or richesse. And in that your highnesse for the more speedy ex|pedicion of your moste godly purpose to bring Goddes woerde to the more light, and to the more clere vnderstanding, distributed this weorke by porcilons to sondry translatours, to thentent it might al at once be finished, ife the deuout English readers any long time defrauded of so fruitful and so profitable a weorke: ye haue therein, moste gracious Ladie, right well declared both how much ye tendre Goddes honour, and also how earnestly ye minde the benefit of your countrey. Whiche your countrey, what they are not able in facte with condigne thankes to requite, dooe and euer will, (as they are moste bounden) supply with perpetuall commanding your highnes to God in prayer, wh•che I think to be the onely rewarde ye looke for or desire. As touching the translacions (because they are of soondry personés dooinges) though there appeare in them some dyuersitie of style and endicting: yet is there in the whole weorke no contrarietie of doctrine. Though euery trans|latour folow his owne veyne in turning the Laten into Englishe: yet doeth none willingly swerue or dissent from the minde and sence of his autoure. Albeit some goe more nere to the wordes of the lettre, and some vse the liber|tie of translating at large, not so precisely binding themselues to the streight interpretacion of euery woerde and sillable, (so the sence be kept:) yet dooe they all agree (euery one as his veyne serueth him) in feithfully rendreing the sence of their booke. So that if any persones there be either of such high conceipte and opinion of themselues that they can like no mannes doinges but their owne, or els of such vinentlenesse that they wil not well interprete simple mannes doynges, whiche themselues can for the moste parte sooner finde faulte withal then emende, or els of such morositie and way wardnes that their stomakes cannot beare with any other mannes labours, be they neuer so honestly intended or bestowed: such are in this behalfe rather to be contemned and left to their insolent dis•eignefulnes, then either to be paci|fied or aunswered vnto. The partes of deuout readers are, with immortall thankes to receiue and take the fruicion of honest and godly studies: the of|fice of learned men is, without deprauing or derogacyon of other mens diligencie, & without any arrogancie on their owne behalves, to employ their good talentes to the pu•lique behoufe of their countrey, and to the furthe|raunce of godly knowleage: the office of euery studious and diligent writer is, to haue his iye directed so the oublique vtiliti• onely, and than to thinke his vpright wel doinges a sufficiente price & rewarde of themselues, and so without respect of any worldely rewarde or thanke, so referre the fruite and successe of his labours to God the mocioner, the authour, and the weorker of all goodnes. As touching Erasmus and the doctrine that his bookes dooe sowe, although I haue before this time somewhat sayd aswel in my preface vnto your highnes before the paraphrase vpon the ghospel of Luke, as els|where: yet can I not omitte thus muche to say in hys defence, that in case a|nye

persons bee enemies to Erasmus wryting▪ it procedeth more of their en|uie, of their vnquietnes of minde, and of their hatered against the light and grace of the ghospel clerely now arisyng and plenteously spreading it selfe abrode, then of any faute or iust deserte in Erasmus. Whoso wincheth and kiketh at the gospel, in dede cannot but spurne at Erasmus, who hath with incomparable study & trauail shewed himselfe a diligent labourer in Chri|stes vineyard. And truely whomesoeuer I perceiue to be an eage aduersarie to Erasmus writinges, I (as my poore iudgemente leadeth me) cannot but suppose the same to be an indurate enemy to the gospel, which Erasmus doeth according to the measure and porcion of his talente feithfully labour to sette foorth and promote. But lyke as whan manne is in a feure, or with any other greuous infirmitie distempered, the better that the drynke is, the worse it ta•teth in his mouth: so whan the herte is corrupt with malice and hatred of Gods trueth, the better that the doctrine is, the more it offendeth. Sore iyes cannot abide the bryghtenesse of the sunne, nor a corrupte hearte the clere veritie of Gods woorde. Persons indurate are the woorse for reading of holy scripture: neyther dooe they of any thing take more occasion of slaundre and offence of conscience, then they dooe of holy scrypature, whereby their conscience shoulde be edified. Some there be of suche malicious hard|nesse of herte, that they can abide neither booke, ne teaching, ne reading, ne any thing els, that may helpe or emende the ignoraunt peoples knowlege. And suche, because they woulde lette and stoppe Goddes glory, deprauie all good thinges, and pronounce them to be naught. But suche are in this be|halfe not to bee passed on, ne to be hearde. For as a body corrupted with yll humours or diseases, the more and better that it is nourished with good me|lates and drinkes, the worse it is: so a cankarde stomake and a wiked hert, the more holesome doctrine that is ministred vnto it, the more it is indurate, the more doeth it enuie the publique vtiltie vnto men▪ and the more dooeth it striue, and wrastle against the veritie. Pharao was neuer more eage in persecuting the people of God, thē whan he was by dayly plagues and mi|racles most of all prouoked te conuerte. The Pharisees neuer more furious|ly, swelled, ensoured, or raged against Christ, then whan he alleaged holy scripture vnto them, or brought againste them the testimony of theyr owne lawe which they coulde not deny. The scripture of God is all good and god|ly, yet like as the same to the good spirite is a sure porte of tranquilltie and peace, so is it to the wiked conscience a stumbling blocke, and a stone of of|fence. Out of one and the same floure the Bee gathereth honey, and the spilder sucketh venome: so great diuersitie of operacion there is in good and ci|uill natures. And the common faulte that malignaunt persones doe allege against the publishing of Goddes woorde in the mother tongue, and against the setting foorth of holesome and godly exposicions vpon the same, is, that suche booke cause sedicion against the doctrine, and than lay their facte to the doctrines charge. This hath euermore hitherto ben the practise and con|ueighaunce not only of the Romish Pharisical sorte, but also of the auncient enemies of Goddes trueth, euen from the beginning. Neither haue this malicious generacyon euer as yet vsed any other way or coulour to deface

the trueth, to let the good proceding of Gods worde, or to sliere and prouoke the indygnacyon of Princes and Magistrates agaynste the publishyng, or

agaynst the true preachers and teachers therof: but onely by allegeyng that it wyll mooue sedicion and teache errour: where in dede Goddes woorde is (as ye would saye (a perfeicte touchestone whereby to fynde out and to trye suche cancard stomakes, as would fain rebelle & moue sedicion, and would gladly haue it so to bee. For otherwyse a great wonder it were, and a veraie straunge thing, if the woord of God, or this paraphrase, or any other lyke godly expolsicion of the ghospell (whiche is in sense none other but the doctrine of Christ and of his Apostles) should corrupt the readers or teache errour, or moue sedicion. God and his moste holy woorde is altogether peace, vnitie, concorde, and perfec^e charitie. Goddes woorde teacheth none other doctrine but peace humilitie, subiection, and so muche obedience to the Princes and Magistrates, as the Romishe Babylonians would not by their good willes haue to be put in the heades and hertes of the ignoraunt people. But this colour haue the enemies of Goddes woorde euermore vsed to suppresse the ghospell. So did they by all the Martirs, so haue they doen by the true preachers, so did the olde Iewes by the auncient prophetes of God, and so did y^e old Pharisées by Christ himselfe, whose moste grieuous crymes were, that he drew al the worlde after hym, that he taught and sowed erroneous doctrine, that he seduced the people, and that he made hymselfe a kyng. And the malicious Iewes layed to Paules charge, that he begoonne to be a sedicious moouer of rebellion algaist Ceasar: not that the thyng was so in dede, but because thesame was a cockesure waie to make al obedient people hate the ghospell, and to prouoke the rew^{ers} & Magistrates to suppresse it. But the lorde, who of his mercifull goodnesse hath of late sent out the clere radiaunt sunnebeames of his holye woorde and veritie to shyne ouer all christen regions, will (I trust) so contiinue the light of the same, that the simple flocke shall bee hable to discerne the spirites of men, & liuely to know the vngodly maligners, whiche by cauling and deprauyng all good thinges, dooe wrastie and strougle (as muche as in them lieth) to kepe the ignoraunte multitude in blidnesse. In the meane time all the simple Englishe congregacion, is bound continually to praye for your highnes, that haue for theyr vse and behoufe procured the translacion of this present paraphrase vpon the ghospell of Mathew, and vpon the residue of the newe testament, wherby they may with a more comfertable and pleasaunt readyng in theyr owne mother tounge, bothe encrease from daye to daye in nowelage, and also continually bee edified in true religion, nouzeled in right opinions, trayned in sincere doctrine, and confirmed to walke in perfec^t innocencie and intelgritie of a true Christen lyfe accordyngly.

